



# Marin Audubon Society

P.O. Box 599 | MILL VALLEY, CA 94942-0599 | MARINAUDUBON.ORG

April 16, 2008

The Honorable Susan Golding, Chair  
MLPA Initiative Blue Ribbon Task Force  
C/o California Resources Agency  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for Proposal 4

Dear Chair Golding and BRTF Members:

The Marin Audubon Society appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Marine Life Protection Act proposals. Marin Audubon's primary focus is protecting natural ecosystems and the native birds and other native species that depend on them. Our all-volunteer organization has accomplished this through advocacy, acquiring and restoring wetlands and other native habitats. We have purchased more than 1,000 acres along San Francisco Bay and currently own and manage more than 600 acres. We also have a long history working to protect marine resources dating back 20 years ago with our work to limit gill netting. It is with this background that we support Proposal 4, as the alternative that offers the strongest protection for ocean resources but with a few modifications as discussed below.

Proposal 4 would protect the largest area of important habitats and best assures that the marine biodiversity will be protected. It would protect the largest area of rocky shoreline habitats, feeding areas for sea birds and, we are particularly pleased that Drakes Estero is called out to be restored to wilderness in 2012. To best ensure protection of our limited and dwindling ocean resources, however, we recommend that the following additional areas be included:

**All of Bolinas Lagoon.** The shallow intertidal habitat of Bolinas Lagoon is an important shallow water habitat for fish, and for feeding and resting area migratory shorebirds and waterfowl of the pacific Flyway. Few such resources exist along the coast to sustain these birds during migration. It is also important foraging habitat for egrets and herons that nest in the vicinity.

**A full reserve around Duxbury Reef.** This shale reef is important, complex habitat for fish, seabirds, harbor seals, feeding osprey and a diverse array of marine organisms. The waters off shore from Duxbury Point north to Stormy Stack and out to the state water boundary should be in a State Marine Reserve. This will adequately protect the northern portion of the reef with enough area to allow populations to recover. The Reserve will offer immense benefits to fishermen through the dispersal of adults and young fish to the open fishing waters south of the reserve.

**All of the coastal area along Tomales Point.** The waters offshore of Tomales Point from the tip south to Elephant Rock and out to the state water boundary includes a diverse area of habitats and structure and includes the colonies at Bird Rock. This unique, high energy coast line should be preserved.

Proposal 4, particularly with the above additions, provides the best assurance that California's rich marine resources will be protected for current and future generations. At the same time, it ensures areas for continued fishing, and has the added benefit of providing the broadest area for scientific research,



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environmental education and wildlife viewing. The other two options presented provide inadequate protections for many critical areas that are essential to support our native marine populations.

Thank you for considering our recommendations.

Sincerely,

Barbara Salzman  
President  
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